

Saint Francis' quest for the Crucified through the San Damiano Cross

Abstract

The encounter with the Crucified is the constitutive element of the spirituality of Saint Francis of Assisi. The objective of my thesis is finding the deeper understanding of Francis' perception of the cross. The topic should be elucidated by the San Damiano Cross Icon and other moments of the Saint of Assisi's life. The study of Francis' relation to the cross will be put into an appropriate context: the theology of the cross is mainly ingrained in the Jesus Christ's Mystery of Easter. This knowledge is deepened in life of the Early Church and, through the enriching epoch-making interposition even the "poor little" of Assisi may experience its fruits. In the fundamental part of the text I will organize the key materials for the study of Francis' relation to the crucified Christ contained in the franciscan sources with the help of the newest literature. Therefore the thesis will offer a complex view to one of the crucial moments of Francis' conversion.

Keywords

Saint Francis of Assisi, San Damiano, icon, cross, theology of the cross, The Crucified, history of the cross, speaking cross, franciscan sources, St. Paul, St. Bonaventure